

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

ACDA-05 MC-02 AID-05 OMB-01 /070 W

----- 125140

R 251958Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1288

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 TEGUCIGALPA 4210

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PBM, ES HO.

SUBJECT: HONDURAS-EL SALVADOR RELATIONS

REF: SAN SALVADOR 3807

BEGIN SUMMARY: POLOFF HAD CONVERSATIONS WITH ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF ELVIR ON SEPTEMBER 23 AND WITH CHIEF FOREIGN MINISTRY ADVISER POLICARPO CALLEJAS ON SEPTEMBER 24. ELVIR STATED THAT THE GOH HAS NOT CHANGED ITS PATROL ACTIVITIES ALONG THE BORDER EXCEPT IN THE AREA OF LOS DOLORES. HE SAID THAT THEY WERE TRYING TO DISCOURAGE THE INFLOW OF NEW SALVADORAN CAMPESINOS INTO THE DISPUTED AREA AND WERE CHECKING IDENTITY DOCUMENTS TO DETERMINE NATIONALITY. CALLEJAS SAID THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO FORWARD MOVEMENT ON THE NEGOTIATIONS AND ATTRIBUTED SALVADORAN INTRANSIGENCE TO ITS OFFICER CORPS. THE EMBASSY DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT THERE HAS BEEN A DECISION BY THE GOH TO CREATE DISTURBANCES ON THE BORDER WITH THE INTENTION OF GENERATING INTERNATIONAL PRESSURES ON EL SALVADOR OR THAT FONMIN GALVEZ HAS BEEN ATTEMPTING TO
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MANIPULATE THE GOH MILITARY TO CREATE SUCH DISTURBANCES.

THE GOES HAS NOT RESPONDED TO THE PROPOSALS FOR A RENEWAL OF NEGOTIATIONS PRESENTED BY THE GOH TO THE COMMITTEE OF SEVEN IN MAY AND MAY FEEL AT A DISADVANTAGE IF THIS SITUATION IS PRESENTED TO THE COMMITTEE BY FONMIN GALVEZ. END SUMMARY.

1. POLOFF HAD CONVERSATIONS WITH ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF LT. COLONEL CESAR ELVIR SIERRA ON SEPTEMBER 23 AND WITH CHIEF FOREIGN MINISTRY ADVISER POLICARPO CALLEJAS ON SEPTEMBER 24. ELVIR STATED THAT GOH HAD NOT CHANGED ITS OVERALL PATROL AND SURVEILLANCE ACTIVITIES IN THE FRONTIER AREAS OTHER THAN IN THE VICINITY OF LOS DOLORES. HE POINTED OUT THAT HONDURAS IS NOT ATTEMPTING TO EXPEL SALVADORAN CAMPESINOS FROM THE AREA WHO HAD BEEN THERE PRIOR TO 1969. HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT SINCE IT IS CLAIMED BY HONDURAS THEY ARE ATTEMPTING TO DISCOURAGE THE INFLOW OF NEW SALVADORAN CAMPESINOS INTO THE LOS DOLORES AREA AND ARE CHECKING IDENTITY DOCUMENTS TO DETERMINE NATIONALITY.

2. ELVIR COMMENTED THAT THE LEVEL OF INCIDENTS IN JULY AND AUGUST HAD NOT INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY. HE SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN CALLED A WEEK AGO BY THE SALVADORAN CHIEF OF STAFF AND ASKED ABOUT THE KILLING OF TWO SALVADORAN CAMPESINOS. ELVIR SAID HE SENT AN OFFICER TO THE AREA (LA VIRTUDO) WHERE THE KILLINGS HAD ALLEGEDLY TAKEN PLACE, BUT THE OFFICER HAD REPORTED THAT HE COULD FIND NO EVIDENCE TO SUBSTANTIATE THE CLAIMS. HE REMARKED THAT HE MAY HAVE A MEETING WITH HIS SALVADORAN COUNTERPART IN THE COMING WEEK, AND SAID THAT REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STAFFS HAVE HAD SEVERAL MEETINGS RECENTLY IN A CONTINUATION OF THE POLICY OF MAINTAINING CONTACT BETWEEN MILITARY FORCES ON THE FRONTIER.

3. HE SAID THAT THE MILITARY IS VERY CONCERNED ABOUT ESCALATING SALVADORAN ARMS PURCHASES AND POINTED OUT THAT HONDURAS WILL HAVE TO RESPOND IN KIND IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN A RELATIVE PARITY. HE MENTIONED THE PURCHASE OF 18 JETS AND OTHER MILITARY EQUIPMENT SUCH AS ARMORED CARS. HE COMMENTED THAT THE SALVADORAN ARMS PURCHASE QUESTION IS BEING CONSIDERED BY CHIEF OF STATE MELGAR AND THE CONFIDENTIAL

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SUPERIOR DEFENSE COUNCIL.

4. CALLEJAS REMARKED THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO ADVANCE IN NEGOTIATIONS AND THAT EL SALVADOR HAD NOT EVEN REPLIED TO THE NEGOTIATION PROPOSALS FONMIN GALVEZ MADE TO THE OAS COMMITTEE OF SEVEN LAST MAY. HE STATED THAT THE IMMINENCE OF SALVADORAN ELECTIONS APPEARED TO MAKE ANY FORWARD MOTION IMPOSSIBLE AT LEAST AT PRESENT. HE POINTED OUT THAT THE

LACK OF A RESPONSE TO THE MAY PROPOSAL WAS MERELY ANOTHER IN A LONG SERIES OF HONDURAN INITIATIVES WHICH HAD BEEN IGNORED OR BRUSHED ASIDE. HE THEORIZED THAT THE REAL SOURCE OF INTRANSIGENCE IS THE SALVADORAN OFFICER CORPS. CALLEJAS REMARKED THAT NO DATE OR AGENDA HAS BEEN SET FOR A MEETING OF CENTRAL AMERICAN PRESIDENTS, AND EVEN IF IT IS HELD HE BELIEVES NO SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION OF THE DISPUTE WILL TAKE PLACE.

5. BEGIN COMMENT: THE EMBASSY DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT THERE HAS BEEN A DECISION BY THE GOH TO CREATE DISTURBANCES ON THE BORDER WITH THE INTENTION OF CREATING INTERNATIONAL PRESSURES ON EL SALVADOR TO SETTLE THE DISPUTE ON HONDURAN TERMS. EMBASSY CONTACTS WITH THE HONDURAN GOVERNMENT AND MILITARY HAVE NOT LED TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THE GOH HAS ADOPTED A GENERAL POLICY OF AN AGGRESSIVE PATROL AND HARASSMENT POSTURE IN THE FRONTIER AREAS. THE HONDURANS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN SENSITIVE ABOUT THE LOS DOLORES AREA AND THEIR DECISION TO EXAMINE IDENTITY DOCUMENTS OF CAMPESINOS IN THE AREA IS, FROM THEIR VIEWPOINT, AN ATTEMPT TO LIMIT THE FLOW OF NEW SALVADORAN SETTLERS INTO THE AREA RATHER THAN A DESIRE TO DISTURB THE ESTABLISHED LOCAL POPULATION.

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----- 125252

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 TEGUCIGALPA 4210

6. THE EMBASSY BELIEVES FONMIN GALVEZ DOES NOT HAVE THE POWER TO MANIPULATE THE GOH MILITARY TO PROVOKE PROBLEMS ON THE BORDER. THE SUPERIOR DEFENSE COUNCIL IS THE FINAL DECISION MAKER AND IS NOT ABOUT TO BE UTILIZED BY GALVEZ IN SUCH A MANNER. FURTHERMORE, IT IS THE EMBASSY'S OPINION THAT GALVEZ WOULD NOT TRY TO USE SUCH METHODS GIVEN HIS STRONG BELIEF IN THE RIGHTS OF STATES, THE FORCE OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AND HIS LONG PERSONAL INSISTENCE ON SETTLING THE DISPUTE IN A LEGAL AND PEACEFUL MANNER. ALMOST WITHOUT EXCEPTION, THE MEMBERS OF THE SUPERIOR DEFENSE COUNCIL DESIRE A JUST AND EARLY PEACE TREATY WITH EL SALVADOR. THEY HAVE PLACED THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS POLICY IN THE HANDS OF CHIEF OF STATE MELGAR AND FONMIN GALVEZ AND HAVE GIVEN THEIR SUPPORT TO HONDURAN INITIATIVES TO BREAK THE IMPASSE.

7. THE EXPRESSED CONCERN OF THE GOES ABOUT THE FRONTIER MAY WELL BE CLOSELY LINKED WITH THE STORY ABOUT A COMMITTEE OF SEVEN REPORT RECOMMENDING THAT THE TWO FOREIGN MINISTERS BE ASKED TO APPEAR BEFORE THE COMMITTEE. EL SALVADOR HAS NOT RESPONDED TO THE PROPOSALS MADE IN MAY BY HONDURAS. IN ADDITION, THE GOH SENT A PROTEST TO THE COMMITTEE ON JULY 3
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DESCRIBING A NUMBER OF SALVADORAN INCURSIONS ALONG THE BORDER (SEE TEGUCIGALPA 2870). OBVIOUSLY THE GOES WOULD BE IN A BAD TACTICAL POSITION IF GALVEZ WERE TO APPEAR BEFORE THE COMMITTEE AND REPORT THAT EL SALVADOR HAD NOT RESPONDED TO THE MAY PROPOSALS AND THAT THE SITUATION DESCRIBED IN THE JULY 3 PROTEST STILL EXISTS. AT THE MOMENT, THE EMBASSY IS NOT AWARE OF ANY PLANS FOR FONMIN GALVEZ TO APPEAR BEFORE THE COMMITTEE. END COMMENT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY POLICIES, BORDER CONTROLS, TERRITORIAL CLAIMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 SEP 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975TEGUCI04210
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750333-0362
From: TEGUCIGALPA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750916/aaaaanwf.tel
Line Count: 206
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 SAN SALVADOR 3807
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 SEP 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <15 DEC 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HONDURAS-EL SALVADOR RELATIONS
TAGS: PFOR, MPOL, ES, HO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006